

Submitter: John Iwasaki

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Measure: SB1509

Oregon Route 35 runs for 41.5 miles, sweeping from the orchards of Hood River to the slopes of Mount Hood. But passage of SB1509 would be more than approving new road signs for that scenic stretch.

It also would be a clear sign that Oregon remembers, acknowledges, and values the contributions of Nisei veterans who fought for a country that denied justice to their family members.

The designation is fitting for Hood River, a community where Japanese Americans were not only removed from their homes during World War II, but in 1944 also had the names of local Nisei soldier essentially removed from a county courthouse plaque that honored them.

More broadly, passage of SB1509 honors all Oregon Nisei veterans, including several of my late uncles in my home state. It doesn't erase past wrongs, but signals a more just future.

In the past, Oregon lawmakers have shown high regard to those who served by designating eight veteran highways. Through SB1509, I urge them to make Oregon Route 35 the ninth.

Thank you.

John Iwasaki